

REMARKS

The above preliminary amendment is to make minor editorial corrections to claims 1 and 2 and remove multiple dependencies from claims 9, 12, 14, 16, 17 and 19.

Applicants respectfully request that the preliminary amendment described herein be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' primary attorney-of record, John J. Gresens (Reg. No. 33,112), at (612)371.5265.

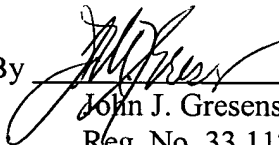
Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300



Dated: March 9, 2004

JJG:mmm

By  _____
John J. Gresens
Reg. No. 33,112